MAYOR AND COUNCIL AGENDA

NO. 11 DEPT.: / Community Planning and Development Services DATE: July 29, 2004

ACTION: Approval of amendment to Use Permit USE2003-00672 regarding loading dock design; Blocks 1&2, Rockville Town Square. Applicant: Federal Realty Investment Trust.

ACTION STATUS:

FOR THE MEETING OF: 8/2/04

INTRODUCED

PUB. HEARING

INSTRUCTIONS

APPROVED

EFFECTIVE

ROCKVILLE CITY CODE,

CHAPTER

SECTION

☐ CONSENT AGENDA

RECOMMENDATION: Review possible design options for the loading dock design and give direction to the applicants.

IMPACT: ☐ Environmental ☒ Fiscal ☒ Neighborhood ☐ Other:

Some options require backing of trucks in the public street, other incur additional costs for design and construction, some affect the ability to use doors to hide the dock areas, some may create unsafe pedestrian conditions.

BACKGROUND: Use Permit USE2003-00672 approved Blocks 1 & 2 of the Rockville Town Square project. Included in the approval was a design for the grocery store loading dock. As approved, the dock area was designed so that trucks going east on Beall Avenue would pull into the east end of the dock area, then back up to the actual unloading docks. However, at the time this design was approved, staff and the applicants were unaware that some of the grocery store suppliers were using semi-trucks with 53 foot long trailers. With the cab, these trucks are 65 feet long. These vehicles will not fit in the approved dock area without modification. There are other capacity and use issues as well, i.e., if the east dock is occupied, trucks cannot back into the west dock. Increasing the size of the loading dock area also impacts the amount of retail space. This issue is significant in that the grocery store has a signed lease executed before approval of the use permit when the loading dock was based on an earlier back-in loading dock design. The lease provides for a minimum amount of floor area as well as design approval.

As a consequence, the applicant has requested that the plans be modified to allow for an angled dock area where trucks will back in from Beall Avenue. CPDS and DPW staff do not support the backing movements for both safety and traffic flow considerations. The City's policy has been to require that all truck-backing movements occur on private property to maintain traffic flow and for pedestrian safety.

The loading dock area needs to accommodate the following:

1. 65-foot trucks (53-foot trailers) for the grocery store suppliers.
2. 55-foot trucks (42-foot trailers) for the other retail stores.
3. 30-foot trucks to serve the residential units (move-in and move-out).
4. Two 20-foot bays for the compactors—one for the grocery store and one for the other tenants (the retail/residential compactor might be a few feet smaller).

Data supplied by Magruder's indicates that on average there are about 20 truck deliveries daily between 7 a.m. and noon.

Staff and the applicant have been evaluating the possible options for redesigning the dock area. Options evaluated thus far require trade-offs, some of which are substantial. The basic options are summarized as follows:

Design Options

A. Diagonal Configuration
   a. Backing of trucks into eastbound traffic off of Beall Avenue across the 15-foot sidewalk and a 5-foot bike lane into loading docks at an angle to the roadway to lessen the turning radius required.
   b. Least cost to achieve.
   c. Could increase retail floor area.
   d. May allow for smaller openings that can be closed with a rollup door. Staff is concerned that this might not actually occur in practice.
   e. Movements on Beall will restrict circulation options for redevelopment of 255 N. Washington Street (KSI) by limiting the KSI entrance to a right-in, right-out only.
   f. Retail frontage provided on Beall.

B. Below Ground
   a. Raise deck to deck height in garage and below grade, increase size of garage to accommodate truck circulation and maneuvering, add service elevator, greater excavation and shoring, major structural redesign.
   b. Trucks back-up in a controlled pedestrian-free area.
   c. Significantly greater cost than diagonal option (estimate of an additional $2 to $2.5 million).
   d. Could increase overall retail floor area.
   e. Maximizes retail frontage on Beall Avenue.

C. T-configuration
   a. Increased size and free clear space required compared to Use Permit design to meet usability criteria listed above resulting in substantial loss of retail space.
   b. Opening likely to be too large to be able to shut with a roll-up door.
   c. Estimate of $1 million greater construction cost than diagonal design.
   d. Significant structural redesign to accommodate needed free clear space.

D. Pull-Through above ground
   a. Increased size and free clear space required compared to Use Permit design to meet usability criteria listed above resulting in possible substantial loss of grocery store space.

b. Estimate of $1.25 million greater construction cost than diagonal design.
c. Significant structural redesign to accommodate needed free clear space.
d. Provides substantial retail presence on Beall Avenue.
e. Requires two smaller openings, one on North Washington Street, one on Beall Avenue.

The attached sketches illustrate options A, C and D more clearly.

All of the options involve trade-offs, some of which are significant. These include possible substantial increases in cost, conflict with City traffic policies, and an in-place lease agreement with Magruder's for a minimum floor area. On balance Option A would appear to be the more feasible alternative since it requires the least redesign work; it is the most cost-effective; it is the easiest for the trucks to maneuver. If Option A is approved, additional measures should be required. These would include designating the outside eastbound lane of Beall Avenue as a loading area between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m., and requiring a loading dock manager to be present when trucks are backing in order to monitor traffic, bicycles and pedestrians. This would mean that the traffic capacity levels on Beall Avenue would be reduced in order to accommodate the truck movements.

PREPARED BY: Deane E. Mellander — 7/29/04
Deane Mellander, Planner III — Date

APPROVE: Robert J. Spalding — 7.29.4
Robert J. Spalding, AICP, Chief of Planning — Date

APPROVE: ART CHAMBERS — 7.29.4
Arthur D. Chambers, AICP, Director, CPDS — Date

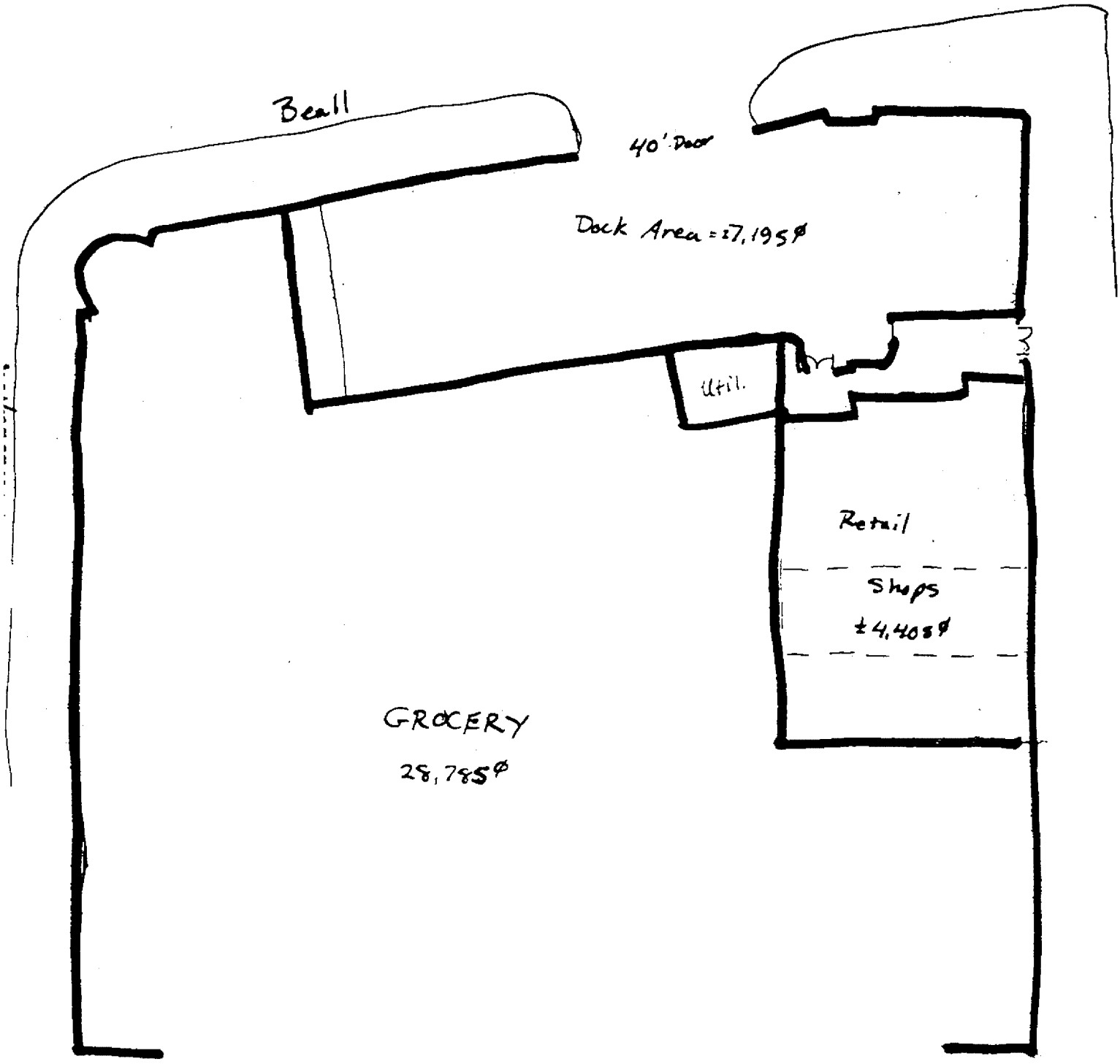
APPROVE: Catherine Tuck Parrish — 7/29/04
Catherine Tuck Parrish, Acting City Manager — Date

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

1. Loading dock design option A.
2. Loading dock design option C.
3. Loading dock design option D.

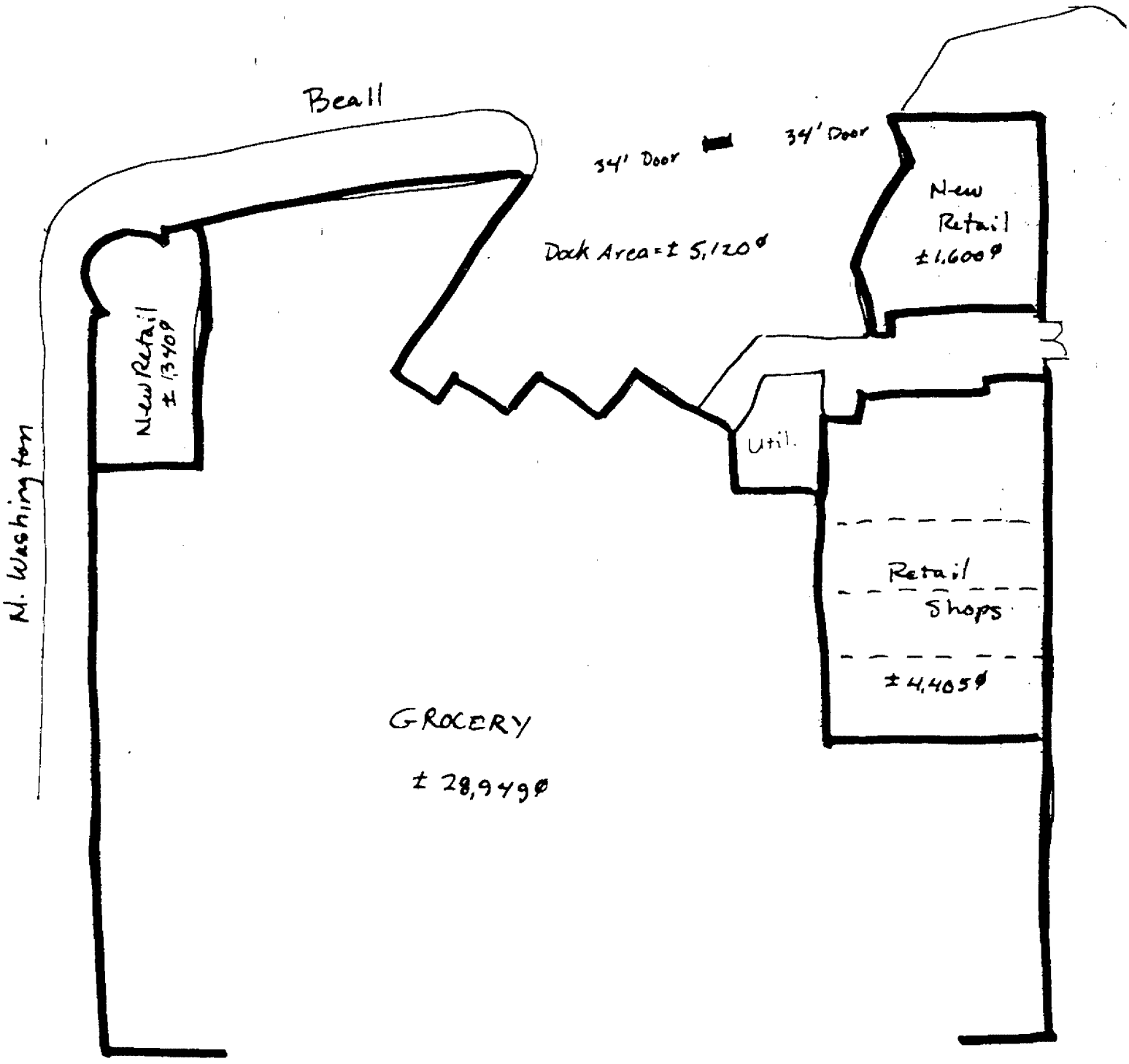
Attachment 1

A. Approved Dock Design



Attachment 2

C. Proposed Back-in Design



Attachment 3

D. Pass-Through Design